

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) for STRATEGIC
PLANNING SERVICES Rush County Economic and
Community Development Corporation**

The Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) is requesting proposals from interested, qualified, and experienced professional strategic planning firms or individuals to provide strategic planning and facilitation services. A Request for Proposals (RFP), which includes instructions for its completion, is attached.

Respondents to this RFP shall submit completed proposals in a sealed envelope, clearly marked with "Proposal for Strategic Planning Services" and the name of the firm submitting the proposal. An original copy and digital PDF must be received by the ECDC no later than **4:00 p.m. EST on Friday, July 14, 2020**, at the following address:

Rush County ECDC Attn:
Mayor Mike Pavey 330
North Main Street, Ste. 200
Rushville, IN 46173

Questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted in writing to Mike Pavey, Mayor City of Rushville, at mayor@cityofrushville.in.gov. Answers will be provided in writing to the requestor, or provided in amendment(s) to the solicitation. The final date to submit questions is **July 8, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. EST**.

Submission can be made in hard copy format to the address above or electronically at Attn: Mike Pavey, Mayor City of Rushville, at mayor@cityofrushville.in.gov. Note: the ECDC is not responsible for any transmission errors that might occur as a result of submitting electronically.

We are pursuing the selection of a consultant as a two-part process. In the initial round, we are only requesting qualifications from firms or teams of firms that speak to their experience and the approach that they would take in addressing our Scope of Work, below. The Selection Committee will then narrow down the list to no more than three (3) firms, from whom we will request a full-scale proposal. Only the remaining applicants will be required to submit a full proposal including a cost breakdown, detailed tasks, specific schedules etc.

RFP Schedule* RFP Issued: **June 29, 2020** Final Date for Questions Related to RFP: **July 8, 2020** Proposal Deadline: **July 14, 2020** Proposals Reviewed/Evaluated by Strategic Planning Committee (SPC): **July 14, 2020** Applicant Interviews: **July 20-22, 2020** (if required-@ Selection Committee discretion) Selection of Consultant by Board of ECDC: **July 23, 2020** Contract Executed by: **August 3, 2020**

*Exact dates are subject to change at the ECDC's discretion. All deadlines are by **4:00 p.m. EST** of the stated date. Any interested individual may request to be on an email list to receive updates on the RFP process, including addenda to the RFP if any are issued. Submittal Instructions Written proposals - including qualifications, budget, timeline, and schedule of strategic planning tasks- and an electronic PDF must be received by the ECDC no later than **4:00 p.m. EST on July 14, 2020**. Proposals received after this deadline will not be accepted or considered.

**Request for Proposals for Strategic Planning Services
Rush County Economic and Community Development
Corporation**

RUSH COUNTY ECDC BACKGROUND Whether a potential business is thinking about locating in Rush County or want to expand an existing operation, the Rush County ECDC is here to make the entire process as easy as possible. As a full-service economic development organization, the Rush County ECDC can assist with every aspect of the search process from site selection, to reviewing the available incentives, to helping potential residents to find the perfect home for their family.

The Board of the ECDC is interested in revitalizing, focusing and strengthening the corporation operations to better ensure that its work aligns fully with the priorities and expectations of city/county residents, local and county government entities, and corporate members. The ECDC is an independent public entity that services the entirety of Rush County, Indiana. Its offices are located in Rushville, Indiana.

The ECDC recent roles and activities: While the ECDC has broad authority as stated above, the organization has chosen to focus its efforts primarily on attracting new businesses to Rush County and, to a more limited extent, to supporting existing businesses, and also encouraging the development of small businesses.

The Commerce Park at Rushville: The ECDC developed and manages The Commerce Park at Rushville, an 80-acre facility along Highway 3 in Rushville, Indiana. The park encompasses several five-acre and 10 acre lots which are available for sale to new and expanding businesses and government entities. In April 2019, The Commerce Park at Rushville was named a "Site Certified Prime" site by the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs. In May 2019, Cormo USA, a start-up agricultural technology firm, announced their intentions to be the first company to build in The Commerce Park at Rushville.

Workforce Training Center: Born of a collaboration among Eastern Indiana Works, Ivy Tech Community College, the City of Rushville, and Rush County Economic & Community Development Corporation, the newly unveiled job center promises a unique regional training concept to bring employers and job seekers together. The 6600 square-foot building, located at

306 N. Main in Rushville, a once dilapidated structure, has been completely remodeled. It is now divided to allow space for the local WorkOne office on the west end and the multi-use training space on the east. WorkOne career advisors assist potential employees with job applications, resume and interview coaching, and information about education and training options. The area includes a conference area, classroom, and computer stations.

Launch Space: As a part of Rushville's 2016 Stellar Designation, an entrepreneurial launch space will be completed in the City of Rushville in the near future. The goal of the facility is to provide an environment for young and growing businesses to share resources until the businesses can thrive in a facility on their own. Residents wishing to work remotely may also utilize the equipment at the launch center.

The ECDC provides coaching for entrepreneurs and small businesses at no cost to the business. The ECDC provides this service with financial support of the East Central Indiana Small Business Development Center.

The ECDC collaborates with the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) to market the county as a location for business development and expansion. As part of this work, the ECDC is authorized to arrange for various financial incentives for businesses including tax abatement, expedited permitting, access to financial support for employee training, and so forth.

ECDC management and staff: The ECDC is managed by a 25-person volunteer Board. Directors represent individual local municipalities, industry and other important sectors of the local economy stakeholders. The ECDC Board is supported by a small staff including an Executive Director, and Client Services Manager. Additional information and supporting materials can be found at: www.rushecdc.org.

STRATEGIC PLAN PURPOSE The Rush County Economic and Community Development Corporation (ECDC) is seeking proposals, due no later than **4:00 p.m. on July 14, 2020**, from consultants/firms to guide the organization with the development of a Strategic Plan. The anticipated Period of Performance will include a 4-month period to provide adequate time for participation by the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), the Board of ECDC (Board), in addition to input and review by key community stakeholders. The requirements for the Strategic Plan are at the discretion of ECDC.

The primary deliverable of this contract and process will be a written organizational strategic plan document that presents the planning process, research, analysis, opportunities and strategies along with an implementation plan that will guide ECDC activity for the next three to five years.

This RFP Requests professional services of a consultant to facilitate the outlined strategic planning process. The ECDC is aware that there are a variety of perspectives, methods,

models, and approaches available to develop a strategic planning document; therefore, the successful firm/expert should be able to discern which method and model will best enable the ECDC to define, develop and complete its organizational and programmatic goals.

Based on the proposals received, the SPC (comprised of ECDC staff and Board members) will select individuals/firms to be interviewed/selected. As a result to those interviews or the proposal reviews the top-rated consultant will be selected by the Board for contract negotiations.

Proposals must be responsive to the ECDC's request. The ECDC shall determine the most responsive and responsible consultant providing the best service at the most reasonable cost. Cost alone shall not be the determinative factor. The ECDC reserves the right in its absolute discretion to make no award or contract.

SCOPE AND SPECS OF RFQ/RFP

Community Assessment and Summary

- A general board/stakeholder survey
- Existing local policies, processes and regulations
- Existing and planned infrastructure (including broadband coverage)
- Current land use
- Local land and building availability/inventory
- Residential housing growth and development
- Existing economic base and competitive advantages
- Locations for commercial and industrial growth
- Regional competition and competitive assets
- Special initiatives for economic growth
- Evaluation of local and regional labor characteristics, market trends, employment

development resources and workforce training opportunities

Current Plan Assessment – Strategic Plans and Strategic Plan Updates

- Evaluate and validate main objectives, vision, targeted industries, etc. for current relevance moving forward
- Identify tasks that have been completed and determine effectiveness or need for any further action or modification
- Identify tasks that have not been completed. Evaluate their current relevance to the County and City's current strategy, objectives and consistency with other existing plans
- Review of City/County Comprehensive Plans

360

Analysis

- Interviews with:
 - Stakeholders
 - Board Members
 - BR&E Participants
 - Limited sampling (4-6) of community influencers
 - Limited sampling (4-6) of general public
- Topic of Interviews:
 - Key areas of focus listed below

Facilitated Stakeholder

Retreat:

- 10-15 participants
 - ECDC Board or ECDC Executive Committee
- Half a day or full day event
- Location
 - Out of county or in county
- Required material to be discussed at

retreat

- Key themes and insights from 360 analysis
- Provide a specific retreat focused survey for those stakeholders not able to attend the

retreat

- Review of community assessment and summary
- Review of current plan assessment
- Strengths and challenges exercise
- Develop themes from strengths and challenges
- Creating strategies and goals
- Create the Action Plan Grid

Recommended Areas of Focus

- Based on feedback from the community assessment, current plan assessment, and facilitated retreat, the Consultant team will provide recommendations related to supporting key areas of focus. Areas will include, at minimum:

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External

- New business attraction
- Existing business retention and expansion (BRE) – Grassroots
- Community Development
- Workforce attraction and retention
- Workforce Training Center
- Workforce Programming
- Launch Space development
- Gaps in economic development needs vs. economic development resources
- Broadband improvements
- Leading the Way in Rural Indiana

- **Internal**

- structure/policies/practices**

- Design system for the positions not the person
- Policies and procedures
- ECDC Mission and Goals
 - Rush to Grow
- ECDC's role within community ecosystem
 - Reporting to Stakeholders
 - Bi-weekly updates (checklist)
 - Template for quarterly reporting
 - Clients
 - City of Rushville
 - Rush County
 - Purchasing stakeholders
- Board and Executive Board Oversight
- Budget Evaluation/alignment
- Performance metrics
 - End of year review
- Financial Plan
 - Long-term Independent Financial Stability Plan
- Accountability of performance
- Strategy and prioritization of goals
- Time utilization to reach priorities and goals

- Staffing
 - Roles
 - Accountability
- Location of office – for future interests and needs

Implementation Plan

- Identify actions, activities and tasks necessary to implement the goals and strategies identified for the plan
- Set a direction to accomplish these goals through a 2-year, 5-year and 10-year+ action items
- Distill the vision, goals and objectives into concrete, specific actions and should not be a simple list of projects
- All identified strategies, approaches and recommendations from previous tasks will be included in the implementation plan
- Identify responsible parties, deadlines, costs, resources, priority level and any other relevant information